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THE HUNTER OF THE PRAIRIES.

BY W. C. BRYANT.

Ay, this is freedom!—these pure skies
Were never stained by village smoke;
The fragrant wind that through them flies,
Is breathed from wastes by plough unbroke.
Here, with my rifle and my steed,
And her who left the world for me,
I plant me where the red deer feed
In the green desert—and am free.

For here the fair savannas know
No barriers in the bloomy grass,
Wherever breeze of heaven may blow,
Or beam of heaven may glance, I pass.
In pastures measureless as air,
The bison is my noble game;
The bounding elk, whose antlers tear
The branches, falls before my aim.

Mine are the river-fowl that scream
From the long strip of waving sedge;
The bear that marks my weapon's gleam,
Hides vainly in the forest's edge;
In vain the she-wolf stands at bay;
The brinded catamount that lies
High in the boughs to watch his prey,
Even in the act of springing, dies.

With what free growth the elm and plane
Fling their huge arms across my way,
Gray, old, and cumbered with a train
Of vines, as huge, and old, and gray!
Free stray the lucid streams, and find
No taint in these fresh lawns and shades;
Free spring the flowers that scent the wind
Where never scythe has swept the glades.

Alone the Fire, when frostwinds sere
The heavy herbage of the ground,
Gathers his annual harvest here,
With roaring like the battle's sound,
And hurrying flames that sweep the plain
And smoke-streams gushing up the sky,
I meet the flames with flames again,
And at my door they cower and die.

Here, from dim woods, the aged past
Speaks solemnly; and I behold
The boundless future in the vast
And lonely river, seaward rolled.
Who feeds its founts with rain and dew?
Who moves, I ask, its gliding mass,
And trains the bordering vines whose blue
Bright clusters tempt me as I pass?

Broad are these streams—my steed obeys;
Plunges and bears me through the tide,
Wide are these woods—I tread the maze,
Of giant stems, nor ask a guide.
I hunt, till day's last glimmer dies
O'er woody vale and grassy height;
And kind the voice and glad the eyes,
That welcome my return at night.

MRS. MADISON.

This remarkable woman is one of the persons most visited by strangers in Washington, and those who visit her are always deeply impressed with her agreeable manners, her wonderful memory and her dignified bearing. During the last half of the winter just past she has not participated in the fashionoble circles of the metropolis, which is, perhaps, for the number of its people, always, during a session of Congress, the gayest city in the Union. The loss of a sister, at an advanced age, a Mrs. Todd, residing in Virginia, has caused her temporary withdrawal from all public circles. Her house, upon what is called the President's Square, was crowded on New Year's Day; and next to the President and ex-President Adams, Mrs. Madison received the greatest number of visitors from the citizens of, and the strangers then in, Washington. Mrs. Madison, upon that occasion, received nearly or quite a thousand calls, most of them she received while standing, and while attended by her nieces and granddaughters.

Mrs. Madison is a tall dignified woman, with a full face, blue eyes and somewhat florid complexion, and is apparently over seventy years of age. Her dress was black and in a style that comported well with her years; and upon her head she wore a white turban, with a black veil.—Her manners have all the stateliness of "olden time," yet sweetly harmonize with the changes of the present day. She expressed herself grateful to her countrymen for the favors they have extended towards her in the recent acts of Congress, and evinces that gratitude in the flattering cordiality with which she receives every one who visits her. Her house is a miniature museum of the fine arts. The greatest part of her collection is still at her former residence in Montpelier, Va., but what has already been removed here well repays the visiter, aside from the gratification of seeing their venerable possessor. Her collections in sculpture consist of a *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*, by Canova; a bust of Washington, presented to Mr. Madison, by a sculptor at Rome; and figures of deities, with other representations from the ancient mythology. Around on the walls of her parlor are suspended the heads of Columbus, Vespucius, Magellan, Cortez and Sir Walter Raleigh, painted in the Escurial, in Spain. Above them hang the portraits of Washington, Jefferson, Monroe and Mr. Madison, by Gilbert Stuart which Mrs. Madison says are very correct, and which fully justify Stuart's celebrity as a portrait painter. If Mrs. Madison's portrait was a good likeness, she must have been a handsome woman in her day, of which she still retains some traces in her old age. Next to Washington, and according to the succession of the Presidents, is the portrait of John Adams, painted by Trumbull, in his usual style; in the same room is the picture of a saint, by Titian; while through the folding doors that communicate to the back parlor, may be seen a painting of *Christ Breaking Bread after his Resurrection.* This occupies nearly one side of the wall, extending from floor to floor, and was painted by Car Spruygt, of the Flemish School. It was purchased by Mrs. Madison's son, at a cost of about two thousand dollars, and sent to her from Europe. Over the fire place, in the same room, is a very old painting, representing a group of maidens surprised by Pan, while playing in a grove. Pan, it seems, has fallen in love with the handsomeest one, while the rest are quite merry at the idea of such a creature as he being susceptible of the tender passion.—Her collection "winds up" with a number of rare engravings, and also fine sets of medals, on French and American subjects.—*Philada. Ev. News.*

Cass and Hannegan in reply to Benton.

We have not room to prepare such a condensed account of the speech of Gen. Cass, on the 2d April, in reply to Col. Benton, as its importance demands. We give first the entire remarks of Mr. Hannegan, as they come first in order, as follows:

Mr. HANNEGAN said:—Mr. President, I have a few words to say. I would not have made a single observation on this occasion had it not been for a particular expression, accompanied by a very significant look towards this quarter which fell from the Senator from Missouri. Certainly he was the last man here from whom I expected an unkind look or an unkind allusion. As I said before, upon a certain occasion here, he has been to great a extent my political teacher; sir, I learned from him on this Oregon question more than I learned from any other living man. I learned from his speech on the Ashburton treaty, which from that hour has been to him the constant theme of deadly and unmitigated hostility against the negotiator who made that treaty and Senators who voted for it. I learned mainly from that speech my principles and relation to the Oregon question. From that speech of the Senator from Missouri, I learned that the American title to Oregon up to latitude 55 degrees was good, not only against Great Britain, but the whole world. That speech was made here only four or five years ago, and in it the Senator taught me those principles which, powerful as he is, he never will be able to eradicate from my mind. He planted them there, but he cannot now pluck them up at his will. I learned at the feet of Gamaliel; I have passed from thence; I have proclaimed the principles which I found there. He may do as he lists. He may, before his country and the world, abandon those principles. I will not. I make the same pledge made by the distinguished, and patriotic, and honest American who occupied that seat yesterday, (Mr. Cass,) that whenever it is shown that the line of 49 degrees was extended to the Pacific ocean, I will not only close my mouth and seal my lips against the utterance of any claim to the country north of 49 degrees, but to any part of Oregon. But self-confident as the Senator is that he holds "the Agamemnon of our little band" a prisoner, he may find himself mistaken. Not one single document to which he referred—not one paragraph which he read has reference to a foot of land, with the exception of his allusion to Lewis and Clarke, west of the Rocky mountains. What right had England and the United States to settle a line dividing a country belonging to Spain?—The Senator from Missouri is aware that such was never the intention—such was never in the contemplation of England and the United States. But this was the pledge made by the Senator from Michigan. By this he is bound; and by this after all that he has said I express myself also bound. Whenever it can be shown that the treaty of Utrecht contemplated the establishment of the parallel of 49 degrees west of the Rocky mountains, I close my mouth as to Oregon. Spain was a party to that treaty, but she did not come in, if I recollect right, till some time afterwards. I speak from recollection, and do not make the statement with perfect confidence of its accuracy, but such is my impression. Spain came into it afterwards; protesting that she did not yield any rights on the northwest coast, and only when that protest was concurred in did she become a party. As to France, prior to 1713, she never asserted a title to a foot of territory, from the isthmus of Darien to the Arctic circle, on the Pacific coast.—And yet England and France according to the version which he [Mr. Benton] gives, and with the impression which he would produce upon the Senate and upon the country, parceled out what we now call Oregon. Yet up to that moment,—up to the signing of the treaty of Utrecht, and long afterwards, and down to the signing of the Nootka Sound convention, before all Europe, with the assent of all Christendom, Spain asserted, and maintained, and defended her title to the whole of that coast. It would be folly for me to go even for an instant, into the arguments by which all this has been sustained. It is a notorious fact, which no man, Senator or otherwise, can controvert. Let me now congratulate one who most kindly did me the honor some time since, in most flattering language, which at once found its way to my heart, to call me "friend," an epithet which I now return to him with his permission—let me now congratulate my friend, the distinguished Senator from South Carolina, (Mr. Calhoun,) that at last the antipodes have met—that he has made a convert of the Senator from Missouri. I congatulate him. He has now won the highest trophy—the brightest intellectual trophy he has ever achieved.—can now make the proudest boast he ever uttered. The great leader there (pointing to Mr. Benton) has become his (Mr. Calhoun's) convert and his subaltern in the course of "masterly inactivity."

"Agamemnon of the little band!" and the Ajaxes—and I the least of them—"the little Ajax!" Sir, I am not even the lesser Ajax; I am but a poor private soldier, in this cause. I ask no favor, and I seek no reward, save the triumph of the great cause. I ask for nothing. I should despise myself if, in a cause like this, for an instant I could cherish a feeling of selfishness. I would rather be the little Ajax—rather the private soldier, fighting simply for subsistence in this cause, than to hold my head so high that I could not see aught below me; rather be the private soldier than with my haughty foot to press the lowly earth as though it were too mean for my tread; rather be the private soldier, than in every look, and attitude, and act, and expression, proclaim—"I am the ruler! I will rule or I will ruin; and it is indifferent to me whether the consequence be rule or ruin." Sir, be he who he may, there is no man in this land so high as to have it in his power to elevate and depress public sentiment in America at his will. Be he who he may who makes such an attempt, he will speedily find his level. "Little Ajax" let it be; but let me remind the Senator from Missouri that Agamemnon and the Ajaxes were not the only actors at the siege of Troy. There was an Achilles there; and we have an Achilles here. Let the Senator from Missouri beware, lest he be the Hector who will grace the triumph of this Achilles.

[Here there was a loud burst of applause in the galleries, which the President's rebuke failed to check for a few moments.]

Mr. CASS returned his thanks to his friend, Mr. Hannegan, for what he had said for him, while he was absent; and was still more so for the common object which they all had in view; which was the interest and honor of their country.

Mr. CASS said he had come here this morning to free himself. Twice in my life (said Gen. C.) I have been captured by enemies, fighting against British pretensions in war, and again fighting against British pretensions in peace. My country redeemed me in the former case; I come to redeem myself in the latter.—There was nothing in the former relations between the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. Benton) and myself, which would justify the use of the term enemies. If, however, it should be otherwise, I can only say, that I have borne worse calamities than even the hostility of the Hon. Gent. from Missouri. I mean to justify and vindicate myself to the entire satisfaction of every one within the sound of my voice.

Mr. HANNEGAN. Every impartial man.

Gen. CASS. No, Mr. President, I cannot accept such a qualification. If my vindication is not satisfactory to every one within the sound of my voice, partial or impartial, I will agree to be tied to the chariot wheels of the Hon. gentleman.

Mr. Cass then went on and demonstrated that the treaty of Utrecht did not apply to the country west of the Rocky mountains.

From the Watertown (N. Y.) Jeffersonian

MOUNT VERNON.

WASHINGTON CITY, April 7, 1846.

MY DEAR SIR:—During the last week I had the long-expected pleasure of visiting MOUNT VERNON, the place where repose the honored ashes of the "Father of his country." I now regret that I did not postpone my visit until a later day in the the season, but if I have leisure I can again go as a pilgrim to that sacred spot.

Mount Vernon is 9 miles from Alexandria, upon the Potomac, in Fairfax county, Virginia. From Washington we were conveyed to Alexandria in a steamboat, and chartering a hack at the latter place. we were soon upon the Estate. The country from Alexandria to Mount Vernon is very poor—in fact the poorest I ever saw. The road is quite a bad one, equal to any in the northern part of Jefferson county. But these were but casual circumstances, and did not in the least abate our ardor. The portion of country through which we passed, is the poorest in Fairfax county, and perhaps the poorest in all Virginia. The soil is of a dirty yellow color, and at a distance presents a most sterile and barren aspect. For nearly a mile and a half after our entrance upon the estate, we wound about in the woods—crossing small brooks—ascending hills—and wallowing in mud holes.—At last we arrived at the porters lodge, and the gate was opened by an old female slave, to whom that duty is expressly assigned. Almost the first object that attracts the attention of the visitor, is the naked walls of a portion of the negro quarters. These were destroyed by fire previous to the death of Washington, and the ruin—presenting itself as it does, the most prominent object that at first greets the eye—affords a not unfair type of the general desolation that pervades, to a great extent, the whole plantation. Passing the negro quarters, and turning sharply to the right, we stood in front of the mansion of Washington. It is a plain, two story building, and fronts a hollow square—on two sides of which square are the dwellings of the slaves, and upon the other is the garden, cut off from the yard by a row of trees. Passing through this square, down a long lane, and turning again to the right, we stood before the tomb of Washington. The vault is quite a large one—the rear being occupied by different members of the family, while in the front part, guarded only by an iron railing, are placed the two marble sarcophagi—the one upon the right containing all that remains of "WASHINTON," and the one upon the left containing the ashes of "MARTHA," the consort of Washington. The tomb is placed in a most romantic and agreeable place, surrounded by evergreens, and around the whole locality reigns an unbroken silence. My feelings at this time were vague, conflicting, and perhaps fearful. I stood by the side of the tomb of Washington—a place which, in my childhood, I had longed to visit—but how different was the real tomb from that which my imagination had pictured. Disappointment always shocks the feelings, no matter whether the disappointment be a happy or a disagreeable one. I know not how it was, but the whole appearance of things about the estate was different from what I had supposed it should be.

Thousands and thousands visit this place every year. Those who do go are mostly strangers, for in this, as in all other curiosities.

"'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view."

By the side of the tomb is a marble shaft, marking the resting place of a niece of General Washington. It is a pretty ornament, and is surrounded by a substantial iron railing.

Passing back by the same way we had come, we had a better opportunity of observing the general appearance of things. The agricultural tools, and in fact the buildings, and every thing connected with the place, are in a slovenish condition—every thing seems going to decay.

The estate is now owned by J. A. Washington, a nephew of the General.—I doubt not the estate hangs heavily upon his hands, for in a pecuniary point of view, it is indeed a bad investment. But it will always be an interesting place to every American patriot, for here Washington, after having served his country both as a warrior and statesman, retired to spend his last days in quiet and repose. Upon this estate he died—through his residence here it was his greatest pride to beautify and adorn it, and he often spoke in terms of great affection and interest of this spot. It is to be regretted that the property could not be owned by the Nation. Congress could not perform a greater duty for the people than by the purchase of Mount Vernon estate.

There are now upon the plantation about 25 slaves, who seem to be contented and happy. They are decently clothed, and I doubt not, well fed and cared for. The old slaves speak in terms of great affection and respect for "the General."—One old gray-headed man told me that he had been upon the estate for more than 46 years.

Formerly, steamboats and all kinds of craft have not been permitted to land upon the estate, and the journey has consequently to be performed by a carriage from Alexandria. But in a short time as I am informed, a vessel is to be placed upon the waters of the Potomac, and is to ply regularly between this city and the landing near the tomb. I am told that the dwelling has a most beautiful appearance from the river. This is very probable the case for it is built upon an eminence a little retired from the shore, and towering as it does, above the evergreens and foliage upon the ground below, must indeed be beautiful. Mount Vernon, properly cared for and laid out into fields and walks, would be one of the most picturesque and beautiful spot in the whole South. But it now is, the stranger turns away sick at heart, and cannot but think that republics are indeed ungrateful. H.

"Tom, why is a pedagogue commonly known
To be like a dog that has finished a bone?"
'Can't say for a certainty—oh, ah! perhaps
It's because the old dog may be *licking his chaps!*"

☞ Mr. Wockhagenikdewegbeituigenstorben fell down stairs the other day, and broke his name into three pieces!—*Boston Post.*

Truth is as impossible to be soiled by an outward touch as the sunbeam.

YANKEE SPIRIT.

An American brig belonging to Portsmouth, N. H., was once, during the days of impressment, in Demarara discharging her cargo, when she was boarded by a boat from an English gun brig flying at anchor at no great distance. The crew were mustered, and their protections examined, and one New-Hampshire boy, of a noble fearless spirit, and though young in years, of a vigorous frame, was ordered into the boat. He peremptorily refused to obey the order. The officer, in a great rage, collared the youthful seaman, but was instantly laid sprawling by a well-directed blow of his fist. The boat's crew rushed to the assistance of their officer, and the spirited American was finally overpowered, pinioned, thrown into the boat, and conveyed on board the British brig. The Lieutenant complained to his commanding officer of the insult he had received from the stalwart Yankee, and his battered face corroborated his statement. The commander at once decided that such insolence demanded summary punishment, and that the young Yankee required on his first entrance into the service, a lesson which might be of use to him hereafter.

Accordingly, the offender was lashed to a gun by the inhuman satellites of tyranny, and his back was bared to the lash. Before a blow was struck, he repeated his declaration that he was an American citizen, and the sworn foe of tyrants. He demanded his release; and assured the captain in the most solemn and impressive manner, that if he persisted in punishing him like the vilest malefactor, for vindicating his rights as an American citizen, the act would never be forgiven; but that his revenge would be certain and terrible. The captain laughed at what he regarded an impotent menace, and gave signal to the boatswain's mate. The white skin of the young American was soon cruelly mangled, and the blows fell thick and heavily on the quivering flesh. He bore the infliction of this barbarous punishment without a murmur or a groan; and when the signal was given for the executioner to cease, although the skin was hanging in strips on his back which was thickly covered with clotted blood, he exhibited no disposition to falter or faint.—His face was somewhat paler than it was wont to be. But his lips were compressed, as if summoning determination to his aid, and his dark [illegible] iant gleam, showing [illegible] unsubdued, and that he [illegible] venge, even if his life [illegible] feit.

His bonds were loosened, and he arose from his humiliating posture. He glared fiercely around. The Captain was standing within a few paces of him, with a demoniac grin upon his features, as if he enjoyed to the bottom of his soul the disgrace and tortures inflicted upon the poor Yankee. The hapless sufferer saw that smile of exultation, and that moment decided the fate of the oppressor. With the activity, the ferocity, and almost the strength of a tiger, the mutilated American sprang upon the tyrant, and grasped him where he stood, surrounded by his officers, who for the moment seemed paralyzed with astonishment; and before they could recover their senses and hasten to the assistance of their commander, the flogged American had borne him to the gangway, and then clutching him by the throat with one hand, and [illegible] cing him with the [illegible] him into the turbid wa[illegible] rara! They parted to [illegible] and his victim, then cl[illegible] neither were ever afterwards seen. [illegible] passed to their last account.

Indian Notion of the Deluge.

Like most savage nations, the American Indians had a tradition concerning the universal deluge, and it is singular how the human mind, in its natural state, is apt to account, by trivial and familiar causes, for great events. They said there once lived, in an island, a mighty cacique, who slew his son for conspiring against him. He afterwards collected his bones, picked and preserved them in a gourd, as was the custom of the natives with the relics of their friends. On a subsequent occasion, the cacique, and his wife opened the gourd to contemplate the bones of their son, when to their astonishment, several fish, both great and small, leaped out. Upon this the cacique closed the gourd, and placed it upon the top of his house, boasting that he had the sea shut up within it, and could have fish whenever he pleased. Four brothers, however, born at the same birth, and curious intermeddlers, hearing of this gourd, came, during the absence of the cacique to peep into it. In their carlessness they suffered it to fall upon the ground, when it was dashed to pieces, and there issued forth a mighty flood, with dolphins and sharks, and great tumbling whales, and the water spread until it overflowed the earth and formed the ocean, leaving only the tops of the mountains, which are the present islands.—*Dwight.*

LOVE.—If you cannot inspire a woman with love for you, fill her above the brim with love of herself; and all that runs over is yours.

Speak to that Young Man.

He has a prejudice against christians. The specimens with which he has been familiar, have not been of the most lovely and attractive kind. Judging the many by the few, he has contracted a dislike to the whole. He thinks them unsocial, exclusive, and coldly selfish, and therefore he keeps as far from them as possible.—*Speak to that young man* a kind word a kind look even may change his opinion, give a new current to his feelings, and render him more accessible.

You have heard of, perhaps seen, the Rev. Mr.——, of——, Several years ago he came from New Hampshire, a brick-layer by trade, to work in the town of Lowell. He cherished a heartstrong prejudice against professed christians considering them as proud, and supercilious, and ever ready to say to him, "Stand by thyself, we are loftier than thou!" His feelings of repugnance was so deep-seated, and had such a controlling influence over his intellectual nature, as to generate special thoughts, and lead him to question the truth of the Bible. One day as he was going to his work, he saw a gentleman approach, who had been pointed out to him as the Rev. Mr——, and represented as one of the most affable and courteous of his profession. "Now;" said he, "I will put this matter to the test. Here I am in my work-day clothes. If this man notices me, I will think there is, after all, something good in religion."

They met. The clergyman raised his hat, bowed, smiled, and looked as if he would say. "I should be happy to become acquainted with you." The young brick-layer passed on to his labor, but could not forget his promise. The next Sabbath he went to hear that "gentlemanly minister," and acquaintance ensued of the most agreeable and salutary kind. His sceptical notions melted away before kind treatment, like snow in an April shower, and he soon became an honest inquirer after truth and mercy. Now he is the beloved pastor of a flourishing church.

Kind and courteous attentions to young men are a very cheap but they are often a very effective mode of usefulness. As you read this, my christian brother, you probably think of some one whom you may have passed with an air of indifference, when you might easily have given him your hand, and shown him some civility. Speak to him. Very likely he will think the better of your [illegible] *Watchm*[illegible]

WASHINGTON.—The Rev. Dr. Dewey [illegible] on Washington's birthday in the capitol. The Washington correspondent of the Express gives the following admirable sentences from Dr. D's discourse:

"There was once a man who stood in the loftiest seat of power and did not fall. Hallowed for all time be this anniversary of his birth. I cannot let this day pass, and in this place, without an allusion to his memory. Nor is it by any forced construction that I connect his example with the theme of my present discouse. For much as has been said of the peculiar traits of his character, I do not know that any thing more marked it than the discrimination upon which I have now been insisting. Our Washington was one of the few great men in the world, in whom the better sentiments were wrought into established and governing principles.—This was emphatically his greatness. He was not among the greatest in intellect, in genius; but he was great in this, that his whole character was based upon stead fast and inflexible principle. I [illegible] trait in all his writings. I see every where how all that there was of feeling and [illegible] in his mind was tamed down to the sedateness and strength of principle. I see in his whole life the same concentration of every thing to the one point of duty. Duty, principle, was the pole-star that guided him through the troubled and trying scenes of his life. It is this which the sculptor has set forth, when he represents the victorious chief, with one hand surrendering to his country the sheathed sword, the emblem at once of command and of power, and with the other, pointing to heaven, in token of humble & solemn gratitude and allegiance to the power Supreme.

"And this *was*—in the sphere in which he moved—it was greatness. It was greatness of which many who are called great are utterly incapable. It was greatness which no man in similar circumstances ever exhibited. A Cæsar grasping at the sceptre of empire, an Alexander sweeping the skirts of Asia with his hosts, a Napoleon or a Cromwell vaulting, when occasion served, to the seat of arbitrary power—what were those examples of miscalled greatness, to the sublime and Christian heroism of our Washington?

"This, my brethren, is greatness for every man. This demands a resolution, an energy, a nobleness, to be seen no where else. To abjure all ease, all softness, all indulgence, all ambition at the solemn behest of charity; to bring to an end this eternal contradiction between our ideal and our practice, to pass through the great regeneration, from passive sentiment to resolved and active principle; this in every walk, individual, social, political, in every career of communities or nations, is the only path to unfading glory on earth and to eternal bliss in heaven!"